

**EPISTLE READING:** This morning's Apostolic reading is from St. Paul's letter to the Hebrews, Chapter 11, Verses 9-10, 32-40. It is found in our books, on pages 150-151.

**Ὁ Απόστολος, Πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἐπιστολῆς Παύλου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα, κεφ. 11, ἐδάφ. 9-10, 32-40:** Ἀδελφοί, πίστει παρώκησεν Ἀβραάμ εἰς τὴν γῆν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας ὡς ἄλλοτριαν, ἐν σιχηαῖς κατοικήσας μετὰ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ τῶν συγκληρονόμων τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῆς αὐτῆς· ἐξεδέχετο γὰρ τὴν τοὺς θεμελίους ἔχουσαν πόλιν, ἧς τεχνίτης καὶ δημιουργὸς ὁ Θεός. Καὶ τί ἐτι λέγω; Ἐπιλείπει γὰρ με διηγούμενον ὁ χρόνος περὶ Γεδεών, Βαρὰκ τε καὶ Σαμφών καὶ Ἰεφθάε, Δαυὶδ τε καὶ Σαμουὴλ καὶ τῶν προφητῶν, οἱ διὰ πίστεως κατηγωνίσαντο βασιλείας, εἰργάσαντο δικαιοσύνην, ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν, ἔφραξαν στόματα λεόντων, ἔσβεσαν δύναμιν πυρός, ἔφυγον στόματα μαχαίρας, ἐνεδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας, ἐγενήθησαν ἰσχυροὶ ἐν πολέμῳ, παρεμβολὰς ἐκλιναν ἄλλοτριῶν· ἔλαβον γυναῖκες ἐξ ἀναστάσεως τοὺς νεκροὺς αὐτῶν· ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμπανίσθησαν, οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν· ἕτεροι δὲ ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πείραν ἔλαβον, ἐτι δὲ δεσμῶν καὶ φυλακῆς· ἐλιθάσθησαν, ἐπίσθησαν, ἐπειράσθησαν, ἐν φόβῳ μαχαίρας ἀπέθανον, περιήλθον ἐν μηλωταῖς, ἐν αἰγείοις δέρμασιν, ὑστερούμενοι, θλιβόμενοι, κακουχούμενοι, ὧν οὐκ ἦν ἄξιος ὁ κόσμος, ἐν ἐρημίαις πλανώμενοι καὶ ὄρεσι καὶ σπηλαίοις καὶ ταῖς ὄπαις τῆς γῆς. Καὶ οὗτοι πάντες μαρτυρηθέντες διὰ τῆς πίστεως οὐκ ἔκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν, τοῦ Θεοῦ περὶ ἡμῶν κρείττον τὴν προβλεψαμένου, ἵνα μὴ χωρὶς ἡμῶν τελειωθῶσι.

**GOSPEL READING OF THE DAY:** This morning's Gospel Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, Chapter 1, Verses 1-25. It is found in our books on pages 311-317.

**Ἡ σημερινὴ εὐαγγελικὴ περικοπὴ, ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ Ματθαῖον Ἁγίου Εὐαγγελίου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα, κεφ. 1, ἐδάφ. 1-25, εὐρίσκεται εἰς τὰ βιβλία μας, σελ. 310-316.**

**Today's Apolytikion (Dismissal Hymn) is that of Tone Five (Plagal 1):**

Eternal with the Father and the Spirit is the Word, who of a Virgin was begotten for our salvation. As the faithful, we both praise and worship Him for, in the flesh did He consent to ascend unto the Cross, and death did He endure, and the dead He raised unto life though His all-glorious Resurrection.

Τὸν συνάναρχον Λόγον Πατρὶ καὶ Πνεύματι, τὸν ἐκ Παρθένου τεχθέντα εἰς σωτηρίαν ἡμῶν, ἀνυμνήσωμεν πιστοὶ καὶ προσκυνήσωμεν· ὅτι ἠῤῥόκησε σαρκὶ ἀνελεῖν ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ, καὶ θάνατον ὑπομεῖναι, καὶ ἐγειρῆσαι τοὺς τεθνεώτας, ἐν τῇ ἐνδόξῳ Ἀναστάσει αὐτοῦ.

**THE LORD'S PRAYER IN SPANISH:** Padre nuestro, que estás en los cielos, santificado sea tu nombre, venga tu Reino, hágase tu voluntad en la tierra como en el cielo; danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día; perdona nuestras deudas así como nosotros perdonamos a nuestros deudores; no nos dejes caer en la tentación, y líbranos del Mal.

**INTRODUCTION TO ORTHODOXY:** This class is especially intended for those who are thinking about converting to Orthodoxy and for family members and friends who would like to support them on their journey. It is also open to people who are already Orthodox and who would like to deepen their understanding of their faith. We explore Christian theology and practice by reading selections from Scripture, the Church Fathers, the lives of the Saints, and other texts representative of the Orthodox worldview. These readings are the starting point for our discussions, which aim at clarifying doctrine and worship and helping us to discover (or rediscover) why we belong in the Church. If you are interested in attending the class, please contact **Alexandros Kozák** at [orthodoxy-agkozak@sneakemail.com](mailto:orthodoxy-agkozak@sneakemail.com). Note: The Introduction to Orthodoxy class is now being offered two Sundays a month. It meets in the second-floor conference room, beginning at 9 a.m. In January, the class will meet January 13 and January 27.

**TODAY'S MNEMOSYNO:** This morning's memorial service is being offered for the repose of the soul of **Mary Mitchel**, who fell asleep in the Lord 40 days ago. *Aionia I Mnimi!* Eternal Memory!

**DANCE PRACTICE:** Dance practice will take place today, beginning at 12 noon, and also on Saturday, December 29, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

**ELEMENTARY/ MIDDLE SCHOOL BASKETBALL:** Basketball Practice will take place this week on Wednesday, December 26 and on Thursday, December 27, beginning at 7 p.m.

**CHURCH SERVICES THIS WEEK:** Tomorrow is Christmas Eve. The Great Hours will be read, beginning at 9 a.m. They will be followed by the Vespers Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, beginning at 10 a.m. Tuesday is Christmas Day. Orthros will be celebrated beginning at 9 a.m., followed by the Divine Liturgy, at 10:00 a.m. Traditional Christmas carols will be sung at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. The Cathedral invites you to worship with us, as it extends to all of you, best wishes for a blessed Christmas, and a joyous, peaceful New Year.

**PARKING:** For the time being, Golden State Parking, the valet company, parks our cars on Sunday mornings. We drop off and pick up our cars at the entrance. We do not go down into the garage ourselves. For this service, we've been paying \$5, essentially to cover the cost of the attendants. Meanwhile, we have signed a 6-month trial agreement with the valet company so that, as soon as it obtains the necessary permits, it can operate the parking weekdays, as well. We anticipate this service will begin February 1. When it does, we will no longer be paying to park when we come to church for Sunday services.

**SUPPORT YOUR CHURCH THROUGH STEWARDSHIP:** Recently, you received a packet containing a Stewardship pledge card for 2019, a return envelope, and a brochure with additional information about Stewardship. Please make your support for 2019 a priority, by completing and returning your 2019 Stewardship pledge card prior to December 31<sup>st</sup> of the present year. We can't thank you enough for your continued support, nor can we stress how important your participation is, as a member of the Annunciation Cathedral family. Your Stewardship support makes possible the very existence of this parish, and its ability to offer Liturgical services, educational, & philanthropic programs.

**VASILOPITA/CRAB FEED:** Our parish Vasilopita and also the Crab Feed, both sponsored by our Cathedral Ladies Philoptochos, are just around the corner. The Vasilopita will take place Sunday, January 6 (on Holy Theophany), while the Crab Feed will take place Friday, January 25.

**WHAT NEXT?** As you can see, we're winding down Phase 1 of construction. We have a little way to go, however, in order to complete the fountain, the gates along Valencia Street, the exterior doors, etc. This takes time, especially in this challenging building climate and, of course, money. In order to complete these tasks and begin working on Phase 2 (the interior), we will need to embark upon a renewed Capital Campaign. (More about this in the New Year). Let's stay positive and focused. Consider what you have accomplished so far. As with Moses, we hear God speaking to us: *"Build me a Sanctuary, and I will appear among you."* (from the Septuagint: *Καὶ ποιήσεις μοι ἅγίασμα, καὶ ὀφθήσομαι ἐν ὑμῖν*). (Exodus 25:8). Building also takes vision, determination and faith. You are doing something extraordinary: you are building His sanctuary, a sacred space, right the heart of one of the world's premier cities. Here, the Orthodox Christian faith is poised to proclaim the Gospel message of salvation to a whole new generation of worshippers!



*"The Church shall be a home for Orthodox Christians from every ethnic and national background. It shall be a house of prayer for all humankind, in which the Holy Name of our Triune God shall be extolled and all of creation sanctified."*